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"Stella," Lora said, after breakfast on Monday morning, "I want you presently in auntie's room to try on your dress for to-morrow evening. I have desired Clarice to be there in order to make any alterations that may be needed. Captain Flamank brought our things with him on Saturday," she continued, turning to Marian Raye, who was close by; "and even London dressmakers are sometimes so stupid, that there is no knowing what may have to be done to them."

"What is your dress?" asked Marian of Stella, as Lora's attention was called away.

"I don't know, really," Stella replied, very innocently; "white, I suppose; but I can ask Lora."

"No, no: don't be so silly. Just as though a girl of your age did not know what she was going to wear at what, I suppose, is your first ball. You may tell that to some one else!" and Miss Raye laughed provokingly.

"Indeed I should not say so if I did know," Stella answered, as meekly as she could. "Somerset always chooses what is very nice and pretty; and I think Lora said he had bought these."

"Stella appears marvelously innocent and indifferent about her dress; but it is surprising how wonderfully well everything she wears suits her, even to a shade," remarked Carrie. "I can scarcely fancy any second person so very considerate and thoughtful on one's behalf."

Stella coloured a little beneath the unkind aspersions, which, though spoken with assumed mirth, was in reality intended to annoy her. She would have cared nothing had they accused her in plain terms of love of dress; for she would have treated it as a mistake on their part. But to be accused of feigning contempt and indifference, while all the time feeling the contrary, was rather difficult to bear in silence and composure; for Stella was a child and very human. But she made no answer, only that flush of colour on her pale cheeks, and in turning away she caught the eye of Captain Flamank, who had been talking apart with Harry Luxmoor, fixed earnestly upon her.

"Well done, little Stella! Another victory!" he murmured, as she passed, looking down on her with grave compassionate eyes; and Stella glanced up and smiled, and the disturbed peace of mind came back again; for she felt the opinion of one of her best and truest friends remained unaltered. Arrived in her aunt's apartment, she found that lady quite in a bewilderment of dress and fashion; in the midst of which Stella speedily found herself ensnared with no near prospect of escape. The sleeve was a trifle too short, the skirt just a shade too long, a flower here and a trimming there not precisely as it should be; while Clarice suggested this, Lady Trevannion's maid remarked that, and Lora over-ruled all, till Stella's patience became well-nigh exhausted.

"May I go now, auntie?" she asked at length, when her longer presence appeared perfectly unnecessary.

"I suppose so, my dear. Ask Lora. But there is no need for any particular hurry, that I am aware of."

"Stella is always in a hurry when I want her," Lora answered, rather crossly. "It is very ungrateful when Somerset has taken the trouble to buy her such a handsome, expensive dress, and chose it himself, too; she surely might bear the trouble of having it fitted on. But Stella is always dissatisfied, do what you will for her."

"Nay, my dear Lora," said her aunt, as Stella's pale face crimsoned, "you must not be too hard upon the child. I think she has taken things very well, and been very quiet and good of late."

"O yes, latterly she certainly has," Lora replied in a more gracious tone; "but I was alluding to times not so very far distant. Of late she has been much more compliant and peaceable; and I am very thankful for it. You can go now, Stella, if you wish. I suppose that, as usual, it is the rectory that must not be disappointed. With all the attention you pay them, I think they might have the grace to return a tithe of it."

"Miss Fridell is coming to-morrow evening," Stella said, apologetically.

"Miss Fridell is not Dr. and Miss Lyon," Lora replied, quickly: "it is of them I was speaking."

"I think, my love," Lady Trevannion remarked, after Stella had left the room, "that perhaps we have a little failed in more personal attentions

to them; considering my very old friendship with Monteith, I feel that I may have been a little remiss: with you, of course, it is different."

"I think, auntie, we have done all that is proper. Still, I should be very sorry to slight or offend any one; and, when the house is a little quieter, we can call again, if you like."

"I think, dear, that would be well," Lady Trevannion answered; for Lora's words were very graciously spoken. And so the conversation terminated; but it was a long time before the house grew quieter, quieter at least in the way Miss Gower was thinking of.

The remainder of Stella's morning was spent in writing a long Christmas letter to her little brother. She had a great deal to tell him in reply to his loving note to her; and then there was the text, which she had finished almost to her own and quite to Mary's satisfaction, and which to-day was duly and carefully packed under Captain Flamank's superintendence for the quick post journey.

(To be Continued.)

#### The Hand of God.

Loose not Thy hold, O Hand of God!  
Or utterly we faint and fall;  
The way is rough, the way is blind,  
And buffeted with stormy wind;  
Thick darkness veils above, below,  
From whence we come, to what we go;  
Feebly we grope o'er rock and sand,  
But still go on, confiding all,  
Lord, to Thy Hand!

In that strong hold salvation is;  
Its touch is comfort in distress,  
Cure for all sickness, balm for ill,  
And energy for heart and will.  
Securely held, unfaltering,  
The soul can walk at ease, and sing,  
And fearless tread each unknown strand,  
Leaving each large thing, and each less,  
Lord, in Thy Hand!

#### Other People's Convenience.

We ought to think of other people's convenience more than some of us do. The home is the place where this thoughtfulness ought to begin and be cultivated. One who comes late to breakfast admits that he has been guilty of an amiable self-indulgence, but forgets that he has marred the harmonious flow of the household life and caused confusion and extra work. The other day an important committee of fifteen was kept waiting ten minutes for one tardy member, who came sauntering in at last, without even an apology for causing fifteen men a loss of time that to them was very valuable; besides having put a sore strain on their patience and good-nature. Common life is full of just such thoughtlessness, which causes untold personal inconvenience, and oftentimes produces irritation and hurts the hearts of friends. We ought to train ourselves in all our life to think also of other people.

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#### Ancient Mines.

The ancient copper mines on Lake Superior were abandoned not less than four hundred years ago; for the heaps of rubbish around the pits made by the ancient miners were covered with forest trees that had reached their largest size. The old mica mines of North Carolina and the quarries of serpentine in the Alleghanies showed like evidences of antiquity. Some population in the Mississippi Valley worked the oil-fields in various places. The author, visiting Titusville in 1860, when the first well had been opened, noticed pits in the ground which proved to be relics of the excavations of primeval oil-gatherers. A citizen, digging a well in one of the pits, had discovered and followed an old well, which was cribbed up with timber and contained a primitive ladder, like those which have been found in the old copper mines of Lake Superior. The cribbing had been rudely done with sticks from six to eight inches in diameter, which had been cut or split by a very dull instrument, "undoubtedly a stone hatchet."

The oil was probably gathered by being skimmed from the water that collected in the bottom of the pit. Traces of a similar well were observed at Enniskillen, Canada; and depressions in the surface like those on Oil Creek were noticed at Mecca and Grafton, Ohio. Ruins of an ancient lead mine exist on the Morgan farm, near Lexington, Ky., in the form, where they have not been disturbed, of an open cut, from six to ten feet wide, "of unknown depth, and now nearly filled with rubbish. On either side of this trench the material thrown out forms ridges several feet in height, and these are everywhere overgrown by trees, many of which are as large as any found in the forests of that region." Galena has been found in many of the ancient works in Ohio, but has never been smelted, and appears to have been valued merely for its brilliancy. Dr. Newbury does not believe that the mound-builders were of the present Indian stock.

If you decide to take Hood's Sarsaparilla do not be induced to buy any substitute article. Take Hood's and only Hood's.

#### Cancelled Postage Stamps.

This country contributes some thousand dollars' worth of material yearly to the promotion of a fad prevailing in Germany. The rage for collecting postage stamps, common enough here, is much more widespread in Germany, and for some time past collectors have been using cancelled stamps for decorative purposes. Millions upon millions of stamps are used annually in Germany to paper walls. A room of moderate size may be papered completely with 100,000 stamps of ordinary size. Persons who indulge in this fancy exercise great ingenuity in the arrangement of the stamps, and remarkable colour effects may be produced by tasteful combinations. When the stamps have been affixed to the walls of a room, a tedious piece of work, the whole is varnished in order to protect the papering from damage.

Stamps and parts of stamps are used in decorating tables and cabinets. Those who do this sort of decoration laboriously cut out the head of Washington from the current two-cent stamp and paste the little vignettes by the hundred upon the table or cabinet to be decorated. Then thousands of the tiny figure "2" are cut from the lower corner of the stamps and disposed so as to form a border about the repeated head of Washington. Scores of other designs are treated in like fashion and stamps of various colors are arranged in accordance with the taste of the decorator.

One man in New York, not himself a professional dealer in stamps, sends nearly 25,000,000 stamps per year to a dealer in Germany. The same dealer has an agent in Baltimore who sends him vastly larger quantities.

They are sent to the agents from all parts of the East. Children in search of pocket money, women in need of pin money, Sunday schools and charities of one sort or another collect and send these stamps to the agents in batches of 10,000, 20,000, 50,000 or 100,000. The usual price is 10 cents per thousand, but the red two-cent stamps fetch less because they are easily obtainable, and also because their dye is not well fixed. The Columbian stamps of smaller denominations fetch 30 cents per thousand. Rare stamps fetch more, of course, but the German dealer makes no special effort to obtain such stamps here. Many other dealers in Germany have long been buying large quantities of stamps in the United States, but as some failed to pay for their purchases it is now a little difficult to obtain large quantities save through resident agents. The craze for stamp decorations has as yet made small headway in this country, though at least one collector in New York is making ready to paper his room with stamps.—N. Y. Sun.

—If we are all working for the same great end, how little does it matter that one should use a tool and another a pen and another a microscope! Of how much less importance is it whether we are chiefly busy with our hands or with our brain than whether we are trying to benefit mankind or caring nothing about it!